

**TOWN OF WEBSTER**  
***Office of Selectmen***  
*945 Battle Street/Rte. 127*  
**Webster, NH 03303**

Webster Board of Selectmen's Meeting – October 19, 2009

7:00 P.M. Present: Chairman Thomas Mullins, David Klumb and Selectman George Hashem.

The Board signed the payroll and check manifests.

Chairman Mullins welcomed George West, representing the Tax Collector's Association, who was here to make a presentation of a certificate for 35 years membership in the Association to his "dear friend and fellow Tax Collector" Madeleine Roberts. Mr. West welcomed those townspeople present stating that very few people have obtained this milestone. The position of tax collector, between Mrs. Roberts and both of her parents has spanned approximately 80 years of service from one family to the Town. Mr. West, as a former Tax Collector for the City of Concord for many years, recognized the many deadlines critical to the Town, if not done properly, could put the Town in jeopardy. There was a nice round of applause for Mrs. Roberts and many thanks extended to her for her years of dedication.

Selectman Klumb made a motion to accept the regular Selectmen's minutes of 10/5/09 as written; seconded by Selectman Hashem and approved. Selectman Hashem made a motion to accept the non-public Selectmen's minutes of 10/5/09 as written; seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved. Selectman Hashem made a motion to accept the Selectmen's minutes of 10/10/09 as written; seconded by Chairman Mullins and approved. Selectman Hashem made a motion to accept the regular Selectmen's minutes of 10/13/09 as written; seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved. Selectman Hashem made a motion to accept the non-public session of 9/28/09 meeting as written; seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved.

The Board signed an annual leave slip for Administrative Assistant Judith Jones.

The Board signed two Timber Tax Warrants and an annual leave slip for Financial Administrator Wendy Pinkham.

Don Gross, representing the Police Department, advised that he was working with Lieutenant Mitchell advising that the Lt. is adjusting his hours and working well as a single officer on duty.

Road Agent Emmett Bean had 160 tons of salt delivered last week and is preparing for winter.

The Board acknowledged the written resignation of Tax Collector Mrs. Roberts to be effective at the end of 2009. The Board thanked Mrs. Roberts multiple times for her service and acknowledged that she will be greatly missed. Per RSA 669:67 the Board will need to appoint a replacement within 30 days of the effective resignation.

The Board will review the well sediment solutions and estimates as provided by two companies at the next meeting.

Selectman Hashem made the motion to appoint Sue Barnes and Robin Lampron to a three-year term with the Franklin Visiting Nurses Association; seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved.

Residents Bruce Johnson, Dick Foss, George Cummings and Dee Blake addressed their concerns and comments over public safety, not limited to, but summarized as follows followed by the Selectmen's comments if any:

- Whether there was any information to share regarding Don Gross and when might he submit a report or recommendations to the Board – Mr. Gross indicated that it may be in a couple of weeks;
- How to move the agency forward and the finances – Selectman Klumb advised that this is an interim process that can take time. The Board wants to proceed logically and methodically. Selectman Hashem stated funds are still an issue.
- Has the Board considered a part-time position versus hiring Mr. Gross – Chairman Mullins advised that hiring Mr. Gross was a Board decision that was made. Selectman Hashem noted that the Board is looking for to find a permanent solution.
- What is the status of Lt. Mitchell and could the Board provide any assurance that he will be kept through the year – Selectman Hashem advised that the Board is constantly reviewing the budget.
- How will pistol permits be issued – Chairman Mullins has reviewed the law and is in contact with Police Standards and Training for a resolution.
- Where did the Board find the funds for Mr. Gross – again a budget issue.
- Police Department statistics regarding the number of officers and the number of calls was read from earlier copies of Town Reports.
- There were questions and comments regarding why there is such a length of response time by the State Police, how they patrol the State Highways, what about the Town's status with Mutual Aid and whether residents were comfortable with the situation.
- Accusations challenging earlier statements by Chairman Mullins was read by Mr. Cummings referencing RSA 105:2-a as well as concern over possibility liability to the Town – Chairman Mullins stated that he will review the letter and respond in a few weeks.
- Questions as to whether the consultant was a good buy – Selectman Klumb stated that we have no Chief and because of a lack of funds the Board is asking Mr. Gross for recommendations for use of Department funds, replacement of the Chief and a recommendation for the number of officers needed for the Town.
- It was questioned as to whether there was a possible savings from the auditors as the Tax Collector was resigning as of the end of the year – the Board advised that this is true as long as the Tax Collector appointed runs for the office in March.
- It was questioned as to whether the County Sheriff's Office was approached to fill-in for Webster at no cost – the Board did not review this option.

Ellen Cilley inquired as to how to contact Mr. Goss. Mr. Goss advised that one can call the Department for an appointment, advising that he may try to have some evening hours so as to be available to the public. She wanted to know if any written report by Mr. Goss would be made public, which would seem likely.

Mrs. Blake brought information regarding safe routes to school, advising that this project is to be fully funded. She thought it might be a good thing for the Town and offered to proceed forward with bringing in the maps for review. Other surrounding towns are involved as well as Central NH Regional Planning. Mrs. Pinkham, having had experience with this issue, inquired as to who would plow the sidewalks and pay for the liability insurance.

A Public Hearing pursuant to RSA 32:11 was opened by Selectman Klumb regarding a request to the Department of Revenue for permission for an emergency expenditure in the amount of \$50,000 due to unexpected rains in the spring, the severance pay of two full-time Police employees and the hiring of a consultant to aid with restructuring of the Police Department. Chairman Mullins noted that if approved, this amount would not affect the tax rate this year as it is to come from "surplus", but further explained that it did in fact affect the taxpayers in that it comes from funds usually available to reduce the tax rate. The Public Hearing was opened for public comment.

- Mike Greenwood felt that had the Board worked better with the Police Department that this would not be necessary and questioned why this request wasn't done months ago. Chairman Mullins stated that this

request takes a “sudden and unexpected expense”, such as the recent resignation of the Police Chief, therefore not allowing the Town to have requested the over expenditure earlier.

- Dave Batchelder was sorry to hear negative comments about the Board. He recalled the vote of the Town Meeting that cut the budget.
- Mr. Cummings inquired as to where the funds requested would be allocated and if flexibility was factored in. Chairman Mullins advised that the Board did not anticipate spending \$50,000, only that portion needed. The Board reviewed some of the earlier discussion regarding shortfalls, projections of funds needed, etc. to come up with a reasonable amount to be requested from DRA. Selectman Hashem considered funds needed to pay a police officer until the end of the year, paying Mr. Gross and other foreseeable expenses for fire and highway expenses.
- Wayne Morse inquired as to Mr. Gross's hourly pay, which is \$28 per hour. He is to work approximately 20 hours per week.
- Mrs. Blake asked if Lt. Mitchell would be funded through the year and if there was a breakdown available. Selectman Hashem noted that he agrees that the Town needs an officer, but there was no specific breakdown available. Chairman Mullins advised that these requested funds would probably give a cushion to maintain the current level of services.
- Dot Haskins expressed concerns regarding services as well.
- General comment was that it seemed likely that the request would be approved once the Public Hearing was held and the letter was forwarded to DRA.
- Mr. Johnson inquired if there would be further staffing of the Police Department – the Board advised that there was no guarantee.
- Jere Buckley felt that the resignation of the Police Chief was a disingenuous representation to DRA. Chairman Mullins advised that it was an unexpected situation.
- Mr. Greenwood thought the public had a vote on this public hearing and requested a guarantee that the Lt.'s position be funded. Chairman Mullins advised that only the Board got a vote as to whether to submit the request to DRA regardless of any public input.
- Further general discussion regarding the expenditure of funds continued.
- Mr. Cummings recommended that the letter to DRA be factual as to the needs of the Town.

Chairman Mullins closed the hearing to the public and opened it to the Board. The Board revised the letter, re-read it to the public and signed the letter after it was revised. Selectman Klumb made a motion to close the Public Hearing; seconded by Chairman Mullins and approved.

Mr. Cummings requested that the 2009 Town Meeting Minutes be put back on the website, which will be done.

8:33 P.M. Fire Chief Adam Pouliot requested a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) to discuss personnel issues. Selectmen Klumb made a motion to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) to discuss personnel issues with Chief Pouliot; seconded by Selectman Hashem. Roll call: Chairman Mullins – yes; Selectman Klumb – yes and Selectman Hashem – yes. Mrs. Jones was requested to attend.

8:45 P.M. Chairman Mullins reconvened the meeting and advised that the Board voted to seal the minutes.

Lt. Mitchell, responding to earlier citizen concerns regarding mutual aid to the Town advised that it doesn't work for the Police Department unless there is an officer on duty or on-call. He also noted that the time needed to follow the hiring process for new officers would not allow for any new hires this year. As he was not here at the beginning of the meeting, he discussed the signing of pistol permits noting the need to think about how to handle this issue. Chairman Mullins advised him that this was being reviewed.

Lt. Mitchell presented the Board with the following:

- A request for vacation leave time.
- The semi-monthly Police Department report.
- A letter of request for the reprogramming of the portable radios at no cost to the Town because of a grant which required the signature of the Chairman of the Board, which was done.

Ms. Cilley inquired as to whether the Board had given any direction to Mr. Gross for his report expected to be given to the Board. Mr. Gross noted that basic items were covered in his employment agreement. Selectman Klumb advised that key issues would be cost, quality and amount covered, noting that this will be fine tuned as time goes by.

When asked who Lt. Mitchell works for, the Board advised that he works for Mr. Gross at this point as he is the Officer-in-Charge at this point.

8:55 P.M. Selectmen Hashem made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved.

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Thomas S. Mullins-Chairman  
BOS/jj

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David E. Klumb

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George K. Hashem